

# CIFREM SEMINARS

## A NATURAL FIELD EXPERIMENT ON NEWSPAPER PURCHASING

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*2 PM - DISA seminar room*

*Faculty of Economics- Via Inama, 5*

*A publisher uses an honor-system for selling a newspaper in the street. The customers make a payment into a cash-box, but they can also just steal the paper. We conduct an experiment to study what factors determine the magnitude of honesty in this market. It shows that appealing to honesty increases payments, whereas reminding customers of the legal norm has no effect. Furthermore, we find that the frequency of people who do not pay is unaffected by the experimental variation. These observations suggest that some people have internalized an honesty-norm, whereas others have not, and that the willingness to pay to obey the norm differs between individuals. Additional survey questions serve to improve our understanding why some people have a taste for honesty and others do not. We find that honest people care about what others think of them. We also find that honesty correlates with gender, family background, and social connectedness*